

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DOHA 00599 250637Z

17

ACTION NEA-10

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R 250526Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY DOHA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1566

C O N F I D E N T I A L DOHA 0599

FOR NEA/ARP

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, QA

SUBJ: AMIR OF QATAR EXPRESSES INTEREST IN VISITING U.S.

1. DURING MAY 24 CONVERSATION, AMIR OF QATAR, SHAYKH KHALIFA BIN HAMAD AL THANI, CONVEYED TO ME HIS KEEN INTEREST IN VISITING U.S. AMIR SAID HE REALIZED VISIT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE "DURING ELECTION YEAR", BUT HE HOPED TO COME SOON THEREAFTER.

2. KHALIFA NOTED THAT HE HAD VISITED U.S. ABOUT 14 YEARS AGO, BUT HAD ONLY SEEN NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON AT THAT TIME. HE SAID HE WAS MOST ANXIOUS TO SEE AS MANY STATES AND DIFFERENT AREAS AS POSSIBLE OUTSIDE OF BIG CITIES, AND PARTICULARLY DESERT REGIONS SIMILAR TO QATAR, SO THAT HE COULD OBSERVE AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY IN SUCH PLACES.

3. I AGREED THAT THIS WAS INDEED A BUSY YEAR IN U.S. WITH ELECTIONS AND BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS, AND, HAVING NOTHING ELSE THAT I COULD SAY, MUMBLED REPEATED "INSHALLAHS".

4. COMMENT: THIS IS FIRST TIME THAT AMIR HIMSELF HAS RAISED VISIT WITH ME DIRECTLY. AMIR'S OFFICE DIRECTOR, ISSA AL KAWARI, HOWEVER, HAS BEEN AT ME SEVERAL TIMES ON THE SUBJECT. I HAVE EXPLAINED TO KAWARI SCHEDULING DIFFICULTIES, PARTICULARLY IN '76, BUT MADE IT CLEAR THAT IT WAS ALWAYS TOUGH. I SUGGESTED TO KAWARI THAT A PRIVATE VISIT MIGHT BE A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE, CONFIDENTIAL

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BUT HE OPINED THAT KHALIFA WOULD WANT AN OFFICIAL INVITATION

FOR HIS FIRST VISIT TO U.S. AS RULER OF NEWLY INDEPENDENT STATE.
I HAVE AVOIDED SUBJECT OF A VISIT AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE SINCE I
HAVE BEEN ADVISED INVITATION NOT POSSIBLE FOR FORESEEABLE FUTURE.
HOWEVER, THIS IS BECOMING EMBARRASSING, AND I'LL WISH TO DISCUSS
SUBJECT AGAIN DURING MY FORTHCOMING CONSULTATIONS IN THE DEPARTMENT.
PAGANELLI

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